

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANAGU 01338 01 OF 02 201635Z

ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-05 HA-05 IO-13

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 PC-01 /088 W

-----062528 201648Z /46

R 172222Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6078

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MANAGUA 1338

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJECT: ELECTORAL REFORM: OPPOSITION REACTION IN CONGRESS

SUMMARY: THE OFFICIAL CONSERVATIVE PARTY (PCN) PRESENTED ON MARCH 16 IN THE CONGRESS A RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT SOMOZA'S ELECTORAL REFORM INITIATIVE. THE PCN POSITION WAS COORDINATED WITH AND SIGNED OFF BY OTHER OPPOSITIONISTS IN UDEL AND THE "AUTHENTIC" CONSERVATIVES. THE PCN POSITION WAS A BROAD GUAGE ATTACK ON INJUSTICE IN NICARAGUA AND ADDRESSED THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM INTIATIVE ONLY IN REFERENCE TO THE LACK OF ELECTORAL GUARANTEES WHILE THERE IS NOT EQUALITY AMONG THE POLITICAL PARTIES COMPRISING THE ELECTORAL TRIBUNALS. AFTER PRESENTING THEIR RESPONSE THE PCN SYMBOLICALLY WASHED THEIR HANDS OF THE ELECTORAL REFORM INITIATIVE BY WALKING OUT OF THE SESSION. END SUMMARY

1. IN THE FIRST CONGRESSIONAL SESSION OF THE MARCY 16 THE FLOOR WAS GIVEN TO PCN PRESIDENT RENE SANDINO TO PRESENT THE PCN'S RESPONSE TO THE SOMOZA-LIBERAL PARTY PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW AN OPENING OF THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM FOR PARTICIPATION OF NEW PARTIES. THE INITIAAL REACTIONOF OPPOSITIONISTS TO THIS PRO-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MANAGU 01338 01 OF 02 201635Z

POSAL WAS THAT THE CHANGE WAS INADEQUATE IN THAT IT ALLOWED CONTINUED MAJORITY PARTY (LIBERAL) DOMINATION OF THE ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL SYSTEM. THEY ALSO COMPLAINED THAT THE INITIATIVE TO REMOVE THE ELECTORAL LAW FROM THE CONSTITUTION WOULD MAKE IT TOO EASILY SUBJECT TO POLITICAL MANIPULATION.

2. THE PCN CONSIDERED MAKING A COUNTER-PROPOSAL ADDRESSING THESE

AND OTHER POINTS, BUT DECIDED THAT OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES AND FACTIONS SHOULD BE BROUGHT INTO THEIR DELIBERATIONS. THE OTHER GROUPS WHICH ACCEPTED THE INVITATION WERE UDEL AND THE "AUTHENTIC" CONSERVATIVES. THE SPLINTER SOCIAL CHRISTIANS NOT IN UDEL REFUSED TO PARTICIPATE AND THE AGUERO FACTION CONSERVATIVES ONLY OBSERVED. THE OTHER OPPOSITIONISTS ARGUED THAT THE PCN SHOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE PROPOSED REFORM AND LEAVE SOMOZA EXPOSED TO CHARGES OF UNILATERALISM. THE PCN BELIEVED THAT SUCH ACTION WOULD NOT BE RESPONSIBLE. A COMPROMISE WAS STRUCK WHEREBY THE PCN REPRESENTATIVES TO THE COMMITTEE TO WHICH THE INITIATIVE WAS REFERRED DID NOT ATTEND THE SESSIONS, A STATEMENT OF JOINT POLITICAL PRINCIPLES WAS PREPARED, PRESENTED IN THE CONGRESS, FOLLOWING WHICH THE PCN WALKED OUT.

3. THE PCN POSITION PRESENTED BY SANDINO WAS THAT ALL POLITICAL SECTORS OF THE NATION SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM. IT SHOULD NOT BE DONE IN A UNI-LATERAL FORM. FOR THE PRESIDENT TO TRY TO PUSH THROUGH THE PROPOSED CHANGES DEMONSTRATED HIS AUTOCRATIC NATURE AND THAT HE (SOMOZA) WAS NOT PREPARED TO DIALOGUE DESPITE HIS STATEMENTS.

4. SANDINO THEN READ THE JOINT POSITION OF THE THREE OPPOSITION GROUPS. THE MAIN POINTS ARE: A) THE PRINCIPAL OBSTACLE TO DEMOCRATIZATION IS SOMOZA; B) THE ELECTORAL REFORM PROPOSED IS NOT A TRUE DEMOCRATIC OPENING BECAUSE SOMOZA RETAINS CONTROL OVER THE ELECTORAL TRIBUNALS; C) THAT A POLITICAL OPENING IS A FICTION AS LONG AS THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY LAW IS IN FORCE, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, AND CIVIC DEMONSTRATIONS ARE REPRESSED, VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ARE NOT INVESTIGATED, THE CHAMORRO ASSASSINATION IS NOT CLARIFIED, FARCICAL MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ARE UPHELD, AND THE CONSTITUTION CONTINUES TO PROVIDE FOR ARBITRARY DETENTION (ART. 195.)

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MANAGU 01338 01 OF 02 201635Z

SION, AND CIVIC DEMONSTRATIONS ARE REPRESSED, VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ARE NOT INVESTIGATED, THE CHAMORRO ASSASSINATION IS NOT CLARIFIED, FARCICAL MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ARE UPHELD, AND THE CONSTITUTION CONTINUES TO PROVIDE FOR ARBITRARY DETENTION (ART. 195.)

5. THE JOINT DOCUMENT DEMANDS AN END TO THESE ABUSES AND AN AMNESTY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS AND EXILES. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE DOCUMENT OUTLINES THE CRITERIA FOR A TRUE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL REFORM: A) REAL AND SUFFICIENT GUARANTEE OF A FREE AND JUST ELECTORAL PROCESS WITH ELECTORAL TRIBUNALS IN WHICH ALL PARTIES HAVE AN EQUAL FOOTING; B) AUTHENTIC IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL PLURALISM; C) EFFECTIVE GUARANTEES OF THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION AND THE LIBERTY OF EXPRESSION; D) AN APOLITICAL ARMY AND A PROHIBITION AGAINST MILITARY PERSONNEL JUDGING CIVILIANS; E) EFFECTIVE TRADE UNION LIBERTY; F) INDEPENDENCE AND STABILITY OF THE JUDICIAL POWER THROUGH INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE JUDICIAL CAREER; G) INDEPENDENCE AND DIGNITY FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYEES BY INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE CAREER; H) CREATION OF AN ATTORNEY GENERAL POSITION WITH INDEPENDENCE AND POWER TO PERSECUTE PUBLIC CORRUPTION; I) RECUPATION OF THE POPULAR VOTE FOR MANAGUA RESIDENTS IN SELECTION OF THEIR MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES; J) ELIMINATION OF LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP IN THE SENATE FOR EX-PRESIDENTS; K) PROHIBITION AGAINST EX-

PRESIDENTS OR CLOSE RELATIVES OF PRESIDENTS AND EX-PRESIDENTS FROM OCCUPYING COMMAND MILITARY POSITIONS; L) SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGES TO ASSURE ALL THE PEOPLE SATISFACTION OF THEIR BASIC NEEDS OF WORK, LAND, HOUSING, HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND RECREATION.

6. THE DOCUMENT CLOSES SAYING SOMOZA'S CONTINUATION IN POWER IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH ACHIEVING THESE OBJECTIVES AND THAT THE OPPO

-

SITION WILL MAINTIAN UNITY WITH THE PEOPLE IN THE BATTLE FOR FICTORY.

7. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT SOMOZA IN HIS RECENT STATEMENTS HAS EITHER ACCEPTED OR STATED HE WAS WILLING TO NEGOTIATE IN A DIALOGUE ALL OF THE POINTS IN PARA 5 EXCEPT F, H, I, J, AND K WHICH ARE NEW
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 MANAGU 01338 01 OF 02 201635Z

INITIATIVES OF THE OPPOSITION. IF THE LONG-STANDING COMPLAINTS OF THE OPPOSITION EXPRESSED IN PARA 4, SOMOZA HAS ONLY INDICATED HIS PREPAREDNESS TO HAVE A NATIONAL COMMISSION LOOK INTO THE CHAMORRO INVESTIGATION, STUDY IN THE CONGRESS AMENDMENT OF THE RADIO AND TELEVISION CODE AND HIS WILLINGNESS AT SOME POINT IN THE FUTURE TO HAVE AN INSPECTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS BY THE IAHR.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANAGU 01338 02 OF 02 201638Z

ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-05 HA-05 IO-13

PC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /088 W

-----062567 201649Z /46

R 172222Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6079

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MANAGUA 1338

IM PCN LEADERS EXPLAINED TO AMB AND POLOFF ON MARCH 15 THAT THEIR PROPOSAL WAS TO CALL FOR OPEN DISCUSSION OF TRUE REFORM. THEY ADMITTED THAT IN EFFECT CALLING FOR THE PRESIDENT'S RESIGNATION WAS A BARGAINING TACTIC. THE REFUSAL TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DEBATE OF THE ELECTORAL REFORM INITIATIVE WAS A SOP TO THE "LESS RESPONSIBLE" OPPO

-
SITION LEADERS (READ UDEL). THEY SAID THEY RESENTED BEING FORCED BY CIRCUMSTANCES TO HAVE TO COMPROMISE THEIR SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY TO GAIN CREDIBILITY WITH OTHER OPPOSITIONISTS.

9. ALTHOUGH THE LIBERAL PARTY (PLN) REPRESENTATIVES LABELED THE PCN AS IRRESPONSIBLE AFTER THEY WALKED OUT, PLN SPOKESMAN LUIS PALLAIS SAID LATER TO EMBOFFS THAT HE CONSIDERED THE PCN POSITION VERY INTELLIGENT. WHEREAAS THE PCN THINKS SOMOZA IS GOINB TO BE FURIOUS WITH THEIR POSITION, PALLAIS SAID HE THOUGH SOMOZA COULD ACCEPT ALL THE POINTS AS AN AGENDA FOR A DIALOGUE.

10. COMMENT: EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THE PCN HAS MADE A SMART MOVE IN GIVING OTHER OPPOSITIONISTS AN INPUT AND IN PRESENGING A REASONABLE FORMAL DOCUMENT WHICH COULD SERVE AS THE BASIS FOR A DIALOGUE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MANAGU 01338 02 OF 02 201638Z

SOLAUN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION REFORM, CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MANAGU01338
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780122-1029
Format: TEL
From: MANAGUA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780355/aaaabuka.tel
Line Count: 198
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1d9217c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3292790
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ELECTORAL REFORM: OPPOSITION REACTION IN CONGRESS SUMMARY: THE OFFICIAL CONSERVATIVE PARTY (PCN) PRESENTED ON MARCH 16 IN THE CONGRESS A RESPONSE TO 'PRESIDENT SOMOZA'
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, NU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1d9217c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014